

SENATE BILL 504

J1
SB 1240/18 – EHE

9lr1402

By: **Senators Peters and Smith**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2019

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **General Provisions – Commemorative Days and Months – Post-Traumatic Stress**
3 **Injury Awareness**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor to proclaim annually a certain day as
5 Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Day; requiring the Governor to proclaim
6 annually a certain month as Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Month; and
7 generally relating to Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Day and Month.

8 BY renumbering

9 Article – General Provisions

10 Section 7-413 through 7-417 and 7-504 through 7-506, respectively

11 to be Section 7-414 through 7-418 and 7-505 through 7-507, respectively

12 Annotated Code of Maryland

13 (2014 Volume and 2018 Supplement)

14 BY adding to

15 Article – General Provisions

16 Section 7-413 and 7-504

17 Annotated Code of Maryland

18 (2014 Volume and 2018 Supplement)

19 Preamble

20 WHEREAS, All citizens of the United States possess the basic human right to the
21 preservation of personal dignity; and

22 WHEREAS, All citizens of the United States deserve the investment of every
23 possible resource to ensure their lasting physical, mental, and emotional well-being; and

24 WHEREAS, The diagnosis known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder was first
25 defined by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980 to more accurately understand

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 and treat veterans who had endured severe operational combat stress; and

2 WHEREAS, Combat stress injuries have historically been unjustly portrayed as a
3 mental illness caused by a preexisting flaw of character or ability, and that the word
4 “disorder” carries a stigma that perpetuates this misconception which can discourage the
5 injured from seeking proper and timely medical treatment; and

6 WHEREAS, Referring to the complications from combat operational stress as a
7 disorder perpetuates the stigma of and bias against mental illness; and

8 WHEREAS, That, rather than characterize the condition as a disorder, it has been
9 shown through electromagnetic imaging that it is more accurately described as an injury;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Severe post-traumatic stress is a very common and treatable injury to
12 the brain which can occur following exposure to extremely traumatic events such as
13 interpersonal violence, combat, life-threatening accidents, and natural disasters; and

14 WHEREAS, Referring to the condition as post-traumatic stress injury is less
15 stigmatizing and viewed as more honorable, and this designation can favorably influence
16 those affected and encourage them to seek treatment without fear of retribution or shame;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, All citizens suffering from post-traumatic stress injury deserve our
19 compassion and consideration; and

20 WHEREAS, Those brave men and women of the United States armed forces who
21 have received these wounds in action against an enemy of the United States further deserve
22 our special tribute and acknowledgment; and

23 WHEREAS, Post-traumatic stress injury is an injury that is repairable and timely
24 treatment can diminish complications and prevent suicides among the injured; now,
25 therefore,

26 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
27 That Section(s) 7-413 through 7-417 and 7-504 through 7-506, respectively, of
28 Article – General Provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be
29 Section(s) 7-414 through 7-418 and 7-505 through 7-507, respectively.

30 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
31 as follows:

32 **Article – General Provisions**

33 **7-413.**

34 **THE GOVERNOR ANNUALLY SHALL PROCLAIM JUNE 27 AS POST-TRAUMATIC**

1 **STRESS INJURY AWARENESS DAY.**

2 **7-504.**

3 **IN RECOGNITION OF ALL CITIZENS SUFFERING FROM POST-TRAUMATIC**
4 **STRESS INJURY, THE GOVERNOR ANNUALLY SHALL PROCLAIM JUNE AS**
5 **POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS INJURY AWARENESS MONTH.**

6 **SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED,** That this Act shall take effect
7 **October 1, 2019.**